

Minutes of the Parish Annual General Meeting
St. Thomas of Canterbury, Woodford Green
Wednesday 1st July 2026, 7:30pm, Henrietta Suite

The following documents had been published and were available in paper form at the meeting: Agenda, Draft Minutes of 2025 AGM, PPC report, Finance committee report, Balance sheet and I&E report, PPC Constitution.

Item 1: Welcome

Father Michael Copps welcomed 15 lay members, Fr Patrick, Fr Quentin and Deacon Matthew to the AGM, and thanked them for attending. He formally opened the meeting with a prayer.

Item 2: Minutes of the last AGM (2025)

The minutes of the previous AGM held in 2025 were approved as a true record. There were no matters arising.

Item 3: Finance Committee Annual Report

Paul Turpin, on behalf of the Finance Committee, presented the annual report. He made the following comments:

- Income has been stable.
- After completion of the Henrietta Suite and toilets refurbishments, our reserves now stand at a healthy £264,380.
- We are missing potential Gift Aid income through unattributable cash donations. After discussion, it was agreed to ask the Finance committee to focus on communicating effectively about this and try to increase covenanted giving.

Questions and Comments

A question about the reduced cost of housekeeping could not be answered at the time.

Item 4: PPC Annual Report

Bernard presented the report.

He opined that we have a very good and active parish, but that we could do so much more with more volunteers.

The PPC was again tasked with effectively advertising what is needed, maybe with a 'volunteers' open day'. The meeting recognised that a personal approach is usually far more effective than a general appeal, especially if it come from a priest.

MC urged all volunteers to actively identify and nurture their replacements.

Item 5: General Questions from the floor

- a) Lesley asked what was being done about noise in the Henrietta Suite, caused by there being many reflective surfaces. Many find it a distraction when there are a lot of people there.

Bernard told the meeting that the design was as specified by our architects and that we had had no reason to question the resulting noise levels at the time. We have identified some measures that could be taken to address the issue, but all have pros and cons. The PPC had resolved earlier in the year to review the issue after 6-12 months, once we had grown used to living in our new space and once the need for any action was clearer.

- b) Donna asked whether the lay-led services of the Word and Holy Communion might be developed, following initial training 12-18 months ago.

This was not answered directly, but prompted a wide-ranging discussion with contributions from our three priests present about how to evangelise, both as individuals and as a parish.

Geoff suggested reintroducing groups to discuss the recent papal encyclical, that having been successful in the past.

Lesley pointed out that the Becket Centre acted as an evangelising opportunity of itself by bringing non-parishioners into contact with us.

Fr Michael said he would ask the PPC to develop these discussions and encourage them to be imaginative.

Item 6: Elections

Bernard Hunter had been nominated, and was re-elected to the parish council. To redress an oversight in 2025, Damian, Donna, Peter and Cynthia were also nominated and re-elected.

Fr Michael closed the meeting at 8:30pm with a prayer.